

River will honor those brothers who are still with us, Edward, Lyle, and Marlin, and those who are not Eugene, Harold, Edward, Donald, Gerald, Franklin and Leon.

The United States is what it is today because of the sacrifices of families like the Lothspeich's who gave so selflessly and served so bravely. These brothers helped win World War II and kept watch during the cold-est nights of the Cold War.

The sacrifices of the Lothspeich brothers are worthy of our highest respect and I can think of no greater duty of a member of Congress than to honor our nation's heroes. I stand today to honor their service as the city of Park River will next week.

RECOGNIZING RICHARD F. MELL

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 26, 2009

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the long and distinguished career of Richard F. Mell. Alderman Mell, who is celebrating his 35th year of service, is a vital part of the Chicago community.

Born in Muskegon, Michigan, Dick Mell began his career in public service shortly after moving to Chicago, starting as a precinct captain with the 33rd Ward Regular Democratic Organization and working closely with a variety of neighborhood organizations. Knowing he could do more to help the community by taking on a larger role, in 1975, he ran to be Alderman of the 33rd Ward and won. A year later, he became the Ward Committeeman and took his seat on the Democratic Central Committee of Cook County, representing his community on Chicago's Northwest side.

Alderman Mell has continued to take on important and influential roles throughout his successful career. He held the office of Vice Mayor of the City of Chicago for eight years and currently serves as Chairman of the Committee on Committees, Rules and Ethics. He is also a member of the Committees on Budget and Governmental Operations, Finance, Health, Housing & Land Acquisition, Human Relations, and Traffic Control and Safety.

As Alderman, Mr. Mell has always put his community first, remaining accessible to his constituents with an open door policy and frequent attendance at community meetings. He celebrates his multi-ethnic, multi-racial community and understands that diversity stimulates growth in all of its residents. He consistently strives to protect his entire community and has helped make possible social programs to assist the less fortunate.

Alderman Mell's list of accomplishments is longer than this statement will allow and includes setting new ethic codes for elected officials, fighting absentee slum landlords in housing courts, initiating an Adjacent Neighborhood Program that rids the city of vacant lots, and fighting to decrease graffiti in the city by banning spray paint and passing an ordinance that allows judges to sentence graffiti vandals to community service work.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Alderman Richard Mell and his extraordinary career, and thank him for his many outstanding contributions to the City of Chicago and its citizens. His commitment to public service stands as an example to us all.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2010

SPEECH OF

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2996) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes:

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 2996, the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for FY2010.

This legislation provides a 17% increase over FY09 levels for critical programs that protect our public health and environment.

Among other provisions, the legislation provides \$605 million for the Superfund program which will assist sites across the country clean up hazardous substances, including potentially the San Jacinto River Waste Pits site.

It also provides \$3.3 million to help EPA monitor air toxics outside schools, which I hope will ultimately include schools in our district in East Houston, as well as \$5 million to fund four new centers of excellence to study toxin and chemical impacts on children.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to highlight two important projects I requested funding for in this bill, but did not receive funding.

The first is the Mickey Leland National Urban Air Toxics Research Center to continue air quality public health research on air toxics in urban areas as directed by the U.S. Congress. The Center is a 501(c)(3) institution authorized by Congress in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990.

Americans want to know whether they are at risk from pollutants in the air that they breathe. People who live near sources of air toxics such as major roadways, industrial facilities, or small businesses, are often especially concerned about their risk.

The purpose of air quality regulation and research is to protect public health. High quality air toxics research is the only way to assess peoples' risks and give policymakers the tools they need to protect public health. The Center develops and manages air toxics research with a focus on understanding the air toxics that people are exposed to in their daily activities, and how those compounds may impact their health.

The Houston Exposure to Air Toxics Study (HEATS) is an on-going project designed to study the relationship between personal exposures—the air people breathe as they go about their daily activities—and fixed site monitored concentrations of air toxics by measuring personal, residential indoor, and outdoor concentrations.

HEATS studies residents who live in the 29th district of Texas, in close proximity to an industrial neighborhood near the Houston Ship Channel and a comparison group with similar demographics in Aldine. Because it has been conducted according to rigorous statistical principles, study results will be applicable to the study participants, their neighborhoods,

and other, similar neighborhoods in Houston and nationwide.

Federal support for this project is critical to ensure this research continues and I hope to work with the Chairman as this bill goes forward, and with EPA to get funding for this research in the budget as Congress intended when it created the Center.

We also sought funding for a six-year Capital Improvement Project that will rehabilitate and upgrade the City of Baytown, Texas's wastewater and water infrastructure to comply with federal and state regulations, maintain its condition and reliability and save costs. The City has implemented an asset management program to assess equipment condition, optimize work practices and ensure funding remains in place to sustain infrastructure improvements over time.

The funding we requested under the State and Tribal Assistance Grant would help rehabilitate portions of the Central District Wastewater Treatment Plant to include elevation of redesign of critical components to reduce the storm surge impacts suffered during Hurricane Ike. These include the influent lift station, blower building, administration/laboratory building, and grit removal process. The internal piping needs to be replaced to improve energy and operating efficiency, along with the chlorine contact basin and plant pumping/transfer systems. Installation of post-storm emergency power systems are also a part of this effort.

This is an important project to help Baytown recover from damage caused by Hurricane Ike and overall to upgrade their wastewater system, and I look forward to working the Chair as we move forward to find assistance for this project.

I do have some concerns, however, with provisions of the bill and report language.

The bill defers \$50 million in funding from the Ultra-Deepwater Research Fund that was a part of the 2005 Energy Policy Act of 2005. The ultra deepwater fund provides \$50 million annually for research for recovering oil and gas from ultra-deepwaters in the Gulf of Mexico.

It also includes report language urging EPA to "review the risks that hydraulic fracturing poses to drinking water using the best available science, as well as independent sources of information."

I understand the concerns and desire to adequately protect the environment when developing our domestic resources, but hydraulic fracturing is a well-tested technology that has been used to develop energy for over 60 years.

First used in 1947, hydraulic fracturing has become a standard practice for improving the process of natural energy extraction. The practice involves the pumping of fluid into wells at high pressure to create fractures in rock formations that allow for complete production of oil. Hydraulic fracturing is responsible for about 30 percent of our domestic recoverable oil and natural gas. About 90 percent of currently operating wells use this technology. Hydraulic fracturing, as used to produce natural gas from shale formations, has created new opportunities for clean energy and employment without causing environmental damage.

Recent studies on fracturing conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency in 2004 found no confirmed evidence of contamination